
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District:	Mount Pleasant Historic District	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	1709 Harvard Street, NW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent
Meeting Date:	May 26, 2011	<input type="checkbox"/> New construction
Case Number:	11-286	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Addition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Alterations
Staff Reviewer:	Tim Dennée	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept

The applicant, Barnes Vanze Architects for owner Stephane Muszynski, requests the Board's conceptual review of a proposal for a rear addition to a three-story, 1943, modernist rowhouse designed by Joseph Abel.

This row was built into a slope, so the alley and parking areas behind the houses are at a higher elevation than the lowest floors—which appear from the north as below-grade basements. Much of the small rear yard of the subject property is covered with a parking pad and a wood pergola. Nearer the house is a deck/bridge to the main floor and stairs down to the ground floor.

A storage room at the ground-floor would be surmounted by a kitchen expansion at the main level, filling in most of the sunken portion of the rear yard. A deck atop the kitchen would be accessed from a small sitting area addition or bay projection off the rear bedroom and would be surrounded by a metal rail system. The largely glazed projection would have a small, aluminum pergola projecting from it, over part of the deck.

The walls at the side property lines would be brick masonry. The rear face of the main-floor addition would be stuccoed. The projection at the top floor would, again, be mostly glazed, within a presumably wood or metal structural frame.

The size of the addition is compatible with that of the present house. The amount of demolition is limited, and it does not destroy character-defining features of the property. Filling in the sunken portion of the rear yard seems practical, given its relative lack of utility now. A one- or two-story addition there would have little visual impact on the row, given the change in grade and the many rear-yard fences. There have been some similar additions further west.

The massing of the addition, with the projection at the top floor and its pergola is a little unusual, but not out of keeping with the variety of decks and bay windows that appear on the rear of many Mount Pleasant homes. The contemporary expression of the addition is compatible with the modern vocabulary of the row.

The staff recommends that the Board approve the application in concept and delegate further review to staff.